

REPORT.

The Undersigned, of the committee raised for the purpose of enquiring "whether the contracts for the Public Printing, made under the law of 1831, have been faithfully complied with, and whether or not the prices paid in pursuance of said law are such as a due regard to economy and the public interest demands, and whether the great improvements which have been made in the art of printing, since the adoption of the present prices, would not enable us to have the necessary printing executed at prices much below these now paid," have given to the several subjects referred to them as thorough and careful an examination as the limited time and powers allotted to them would enable, and beg leave to submit the following report as the result of their inquiries:

1. The practice formerly adopted of putting the printing of the State up to the lowest bidder, has by experience of the Legislature of this State, as well as that of the Congress of the United States, been found by no means a safe or cheap method of getting the work done as it should be done, or of having responsible and faithful agents for its execution. If it has been found not to answer well in large communities, where there are many offices and a better opportunity for the benefits of a competition, it is far less likely to be productive of good effects in a community, where, like the city of Annapolis, there are very few officers and less chance for a brisk competition. It was an experience of the evils resulting from this system of under competition, through a series of years which induced the Legislature finally to abandon that expedient, and to establish a fair and liberal tariff of prices for the work they proposed to have done, and to employ such workmen as they could depend upon, who would agree to execute the work for a sum not exceeding these established prices. A comparison of the manner and promptitude which characterized the work executed under the latter arrangements, with what was executed under the